

Let There Be Love

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By Jennifer Morton (Managing Editor, POZ/AIDSmeds/Hep)



A couple of weeks ago I attended one of three papermaking valentine workshops in New York City hosted by Visual AIDS, the Fire Island Artist Residency, Dieu Donn e and the International Community of Women Living With HIV (ICW). Last week, more than 100 handmade valentines were sent to women with living with HIV around the word as part of an ongoing project called LOVE POSITIVE WOMEN (LPW).



LPW was created in 2013 by [Jessica Lynn Whitbread](#), an HIV artist and activist who is also the community relations and mobilization manager of ICW. The project is an international series of grassroots events that uses Valentine's Day as a backdrop, creating a platform for individuals and communities to engage in public and private acts of love and caring for women living with HIV.



This year the theme of LPW is "Romance Starts at Home" and the ICW is encouraging individuals and organizations to publicly show how they love positive women. Here are some suggestions:

- Host a valentine-making event and send them to women living with HIV.
- Host a potluck dinner and movie night for positive women.?
- Record a video message declaring your love for positive women and put it on YouTube.
- Make an e-Valentine for positive women and post it on Facebook.
- Bake cupcakes and take them to your local AIDS service organization.
- Make a donation to ICW.



The annual project is a call to action to show how women living with HIV can practice self-love, support and care, and also how allies can show their love and support for HIV-positive women on Valentine's Day.

"Taking the time to do something for someone else is really beneficial to society as a whole," says Whitbread. "Don't underestimate the value in something as simple as sending a valentine to a stranger."



So spread some love this Valentine's Day. I know how good it felt to make those paper valentines.

To find out more about the campaign, visit [LPW on Facebook](#).

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